

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Planning Board
Tuesday, November 13, 2007**

1. CONVENE: 7:08 p.m.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board Member Ezzy Ashcraft.
3. ROLL CALL: President Cook, Board Members Cunningham, Ezzy Ashcraft, and Lynch.

Vice President Kohlstrand, and Board Members Mariani and McNamara were absent from roll call.

Also present were Planning Services Manager Andrew Thomas, Assistant City Attorney Donna Mooney, Assistant City Attorney Farimah Faiz and Supervising Planner Doug Garrison.

4. MINUTES:
 - a. Meeting of September 24, 2007.

There was not a quorum to vote on these minutes.

- b. Meeting of October 8, 2007.

Cunningham moved to adopt the minutes of October 8, 2007, as amended with changes to page 7 paragraph 3 and page 11 third line from the bottom as requested by President Cook.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft seconded the motion, with the following voice vote –Ayes: 4. Noes: 0 Absent: 3 (Kohlstrand, Mariani, McNamara). The motion passed.

- c. Meeting of October 22, 2007

Board member Cunningham moved to adopt the minutes of October 22, 2007, as presented.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft seconded the motion, with the following voice vote – Ayes: 4. Noes: 0 Absent: 3 (Kohlstrand, Mariani, McNamara). The motion passed.

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION: None.
6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:
 - a. Future Agendas

Mr. Thomas provided an update on future agenda items.

b. Zoning Administrator Report

Mr. Thomas provided the Zoning Administrator report.

Ms. Mooney introduced newly hired Assistant City Attorney Farimah Faiz and welcomed her to the City of Alameda.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATION: None.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

8-A. Crosstown Coffee House six-month review of Use Permit UP07-0005.

Board member Cunningham moved to adopt the draft Planning Board Resolution to renew Use Permit UP07-0005.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft seconded the motion, with the following voice vote – Ayes: 4. Noes: 0 Absent: 3 (Kohlstrand, Mariani, McNamara). The motion passed.

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

9-A. Alameda Towne Centre – Planning Workshop - The purpose of this workshop is to review and discuss revisions to the proposed redevelopment plans for the Alameda Towne Centre. (Planned Development Amendment PDA05-0004 and Design Review DR05-0073). **No action to approve or deny the project will occur at this meeting.**

Mr. Garrison presented the staff report.

Mr. Randy Kyte, applicant, Harsch Investment Properties, continued the presentation and displayed the proposed revisions and reconfiguration of Alameda Towne Centre on the overhead screen. He summarized the changes:

1. The square footage from the prior approval would be reduced because Target store was not needed;
2. The Safeway building would be renovated by the same architectural team involved in the other buildings; and
3. An additional 73,000 square feet would be added at the Mervyn's building site. It would be a department store expansion but Target was no longer involved with the project.

Mr. Kyte noted that Borders was complete and would be turned over to that company on December 3, 2007, anticipating an opening in late February or early March, 2008. Bed,

Bath & Beyond held its grand opening on November 9, 2007. The Beverly and Old Navy buildings were complete; the TJ Maxx building was a few days away from completion. He noted that Building 1900 would have a tenant who would take the old warehouse space, and the construction was expected to start within a few days. He noted that a smaller parking garage would be built.

Mr. Jan Paoli, Field Paoli, project architect, displayed and detailed the proposed architectural changes in the project.

Monique Lee, Field Paoli, project architect, provided an update on the sidewalks and circulation, and summarized the issues brought forward by the Planning Board. She noted that one bike lane had already been striped on the site, and that several other bike lanes had been planned.

Mr. Paoli described the restaurant spaces, their views and the landscaping possibilities.

Mr. Kyte described the building redesigns that accommodated the east-west sidewalk. He noted that the easement documents were underway, and that the construction documents associated with the sidewalk, as well as modifications to the buildings, landscaping and graphics were nearing completion. He noted that the timeline of late spring was still in force, given the complexity of the situation, and that the east-west sidewalk would be put in as soon as possible. He noted that the amount of pavement was adequate to install the sidewalk. He would like the board to consider the issue of the parking ratio, and added that they had been in discussion with City staff for some time on the ratio at this site. He believed the opportunity existed to limit the amount of additional parking by using shared parking strategies.

Mr. Kyte noted that through shared parking, they were optimistic that they would be able to reduce the 4:1 parking ratio on the site. He noted that there was about 40,000 square feet of office, as well as retail and restaurants. By using the ULI/ITE methodology for shared parking, they saw some good opportunities to justify the reduction. He noted that the progress at the beach area included additional language in the leases about the parking fields within their lease areas, and the ability to reconfigure the parking lots when the car wash was removed. He believed that would allow the addition of the kinds of densities and uses that would make good sense along the beach area. He noted that the car wash drove the timing on this phase, and he assured the Board that those discussions were underway, and that they were encouraged by their progress.

The public hearing was opened.

Ms. Dorothy Reid inquired about the change in the parking garage plan, and was concerned about the visual aspects. She would like to see how much more parking spaces would be needed, and did not believe the Centre was short by many spaces. She recalled that there had been problems with the parking study methodology, and would like further clarification on that matter before further expansions were approved.

Ms. Vivian Ford noted that she was pleased that Target was no longer part of the Alameda Towne Centre plan, and that she would be more inclined to shop there. She believed the landscaping plan was a positive addition. She asked about the location of the truck delivery access, and requested confirmation that the exits would be onto Franciscan Way. She noted that she was confused about the storefront locations. She expressed concern about outdoor usage because of the number of outdoor creatures that live near the Centre.

Mr. Jon Spangler expressed strong concern about the renovation. He was pleased by the sidewalk near the post office, and supported the shared parking plan. He believed that the 4:1 parking ratio was unrealistic. He believed the EIR was a piecemeal document, and did not believe there had been a concurrently accurate EIR and Master Plan for the shopping center that reflected what was going on. He would like to see an updated EIR and traffic study that reflected current data. He would like to see more bike racks in front of Trader Joe's, as well as more transit access, which was still compromised because of the circulation patterns in the shopping center. He would like a status update on Mervyn's. He requested more information on the green building standards and methods that would be used for the new buildings. He inquired whether solar water heating, passive solar building cooling and heating methods, and increased natural lighting would be used to increase the center's sustainability. He inquired about the beach dropoff issue, and noted that there was a similar situation at Jack London Square. He did not believe that the cars belonged so close to the beach, and suggested the use of golf carts or similar shuttle vehicles.

Ms. Audrey Housman complimented the design and look of Alameda Towne Centre, and added that she was pleased with the sidewalks. She suggested more disabled parking in the garage for the garage and the storefront that was closer to the stores. She noted that Park Street had a narrow entrance between Walgreens and Big 5.

Ms. Cathy Wolfe noted that she was thrilled with the design, and the thoughtfulness shown to the pedestrians. She voiced her full support of the project.

Mr. Kyte responded to the public comments, and displayed the net gain in parking spaces in the garage. He and noted that the traffic study would be updated. He noted that the truck delivery area and Safeway truck dock would remain because the store was being renovated. He noted that it would no longer be a 24/7 use, with trucks arriving and departing throughout the day and night, with their coolers running throughout the night and with their lights shining into the condominiums. He noted that the architect stated that there would be some screening with the use of landscaping in that area, and added that the entry to Safeway would be on the east side. He noted that the storefront would be glass. He noted that with respect to possible outdoor sales areas, rollup doors would allow more transparency, and that they may be located on the north side. He noted that the access from the parking lot to Franciscan Way would remain. Mr. Kyte noted that Mervyn's was still in the chase for the building, but that they were not the front-runner. He agreed that it would be a very good idea to separate the cars from the waterfront environment. He noted that it would be very important to create a wonderful outdoor

space. He noted that they would take the suggestion of moving the disabled parking in the garage closer to the stores under consideration, and added that there was also covered disabled parking as well. He noted that they had discussed the narrow sidewalks on Park Street for the past 15 years, and added that they had offered to help the City in that regard. He believed that something would be done about that issue.

President Cook noted that she would like to see more bike racks.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft suggested that there be larger spaces for the bikes with trailers for small children.

In response to an inquiry by President Cook regarding the Post Office sidewalk, Mr. Kyte described the proposed changes to that sidewalk. He noted that they had done a walk around, and believed that the sidewalk could be fixed. He believed the presence of sidewalks on both sides would be safer.

President Cook noted that the drawings were somewhat small.

Board Member Lynch stated it was important to understand the current parking configuration versus the new configuration. He noted that he had spoken with the City Manager's office to apprise them that the applicant was willing to work with the City to address the sidewalk issue on Park Street.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft recalled previous conversations regarding the east-west walkway, and inquired when the applicant planned to move forward with the easement. Mr. Kyte replied that the easement should be in place within 30 days, and that work would start in early 2008.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft noted that she had heard comments from residents stating that there were enough discount stores in the community, and that they would like better stores and for the bar to be raised in that regard. She noted that she liked the outdoor garden space, as well as the parking structure and that parking ratio. She favored more walkable, livable, healthy communities. She believed the applicant was approaching her vision of this center and commended them for their efforts. She would like to see a striped crosswalk near the post office, and would like to see one on the other side, as well as by the carwash. She believed a three-foot-wide sidewalk was a negative addition, and that it was an inconsistent feature of what should be a walkabout center. She was concerned about the placement of the bike paths where the buses traveled. She believed there should be a bike lane to the center from Park Street. She expressed concern about the long Safeway trailers that took up 15 parking spots, and noted that they looked terrible and impacted the parking. She was also concerned about the piles of trash left on the ground, which was unsightly and attracted rodents. She inquired who was responsible for the cleanup of that area. She did not want to see any beachfront parking.

Mr. Kyte displayed the parking lot site plan, and discussed the future of the design. He noted that the parking lots would be shifted north, and that the area near the restaurant

court would be reconfigured and consolidated. He added that there would no longer be parking near the beach.

President Cook noted that she was fine with the increased height on the Mervyn's building because without the additional height the center would now look lopsided because some heights had been increased on the new, improved parts of the center. She expressed concern about the parking and its effects on pedestrian safety. She supported further exploring the reduced parking requirements, and would like further clarification on what was approved, and what the driving requirements would be for more parking. She is not at all sure about the parking structure and believed the loading docks were ugly and dangerous. She inquired about Dr. Perry's corner, and was concerned about circulation and pedestrian safety. She requested a firm condition to address the waterfront issues, and agreed with the applicant that a circular drive was not necessary. She would like that space to be used for pedestrians. She was concerned that there was no connection back to the center from the waterfront, and would also like the beachfront corner to be connected to the rest of the center. She believed the design for Applebee's was dated, and looked forward to its renovation. She believed the elevations for the Mervyn's building looked good, and would like updated traffic counts. She agreed with Board member Ezzy Ashcraft about the crosswalk, and was very concerned that the newly painted crosswalks at Shoreline Drive did not connect with the pedestrian walkways at the center. She noted that was not an issue so much for the center, as it was for the Public Works Department. She added that the crosswalks led right into iceplant and did not connect.

Mr. Kyte noted that he hoped the McDonald's and courthouse would be renovated, but that was not within their control.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft noted that she had a problem with the parking on the Otis side, and believed that diagonal spaces were easier to get into and out of. She noted that the Safeway parking spaces were straight, 90-degree spaces. She inquired whether the Safeway parking lot could be restriped with diagonal spaces. Mr. Kyte replied that while he did not disagree with her assessment, at this point it would change the entire layout and geometry of the lot.

Board Member Lynch noted that the 90-degree spaces were the safest, most efficient parking layout.

In response to an inquiry by Board member Ezzy Ashcraft about the CEQA standard, and whether a new EIR would be required, Mr. Thomas replied that the City was halfway through the EIR process. The City would review the original work, and see how it compared to the current proposal. The changes in the project would be assessed to see whether a new EIR would be required. He noted that the total square footage had been reduced since Target was removed from the center, and the location of the expansion area was generally the same relative to driveways and access to the center. He noted that the City would respond to all comments and would make any additional changes to the Draft EIR so that the EIR addressed the current plan. He noted that the City intended to return

with two comprehensive documents: the Master Plan that showed the applicants' long-term plans for the site, and a comprehensive up to date EIR.

No action was taken.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None.

Board member Ezzy Ashcraft noted that she was copied on a letter from StopWaste.org to the Planning Director with respect to the pursuit of green building ordinances. She requested that the City follow up on this issue at the next meeting.

Mr. Thomas advised that an RFQ had been released to advise staff how to proceed with various ordinances, which would help staff return to the Planning Board with as many options as possible. Staff was considering the full range of options, such as requirements for new civic buildings and changes to the Building Code. Staff would provide a more formal update at the next meeting. He assured Board member Ezzy Ashcraft that staff would move as expeditiously as possible.

President Cook noted that she had received literature about APA publications and APA membership. Mr. Thomas noted that staff would look into that issue.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Board Member Lynch noted that because there were more buildings along harbor Bay Parkway, he had noticed a great deal more trash. He suggested that the City consider more trash cans, and inquired who managed the trash collection in that area. Mr. Thomas noted that he would find out.

a. Oral Status Report regarding the Alameda Point Advisory Task Force (Board Members Cook/Kohlstrand)

Mr. Thomas provided an update on this item, and noted that the last meeting on October 24, 2007, had been well-attended. SunCal had made the same presentation that had been made before the Planning Board; they presented the project's history and the consultants presented their thoughts. The geotechnical consultant emphasized the Bay mud issue, and the flooding constraints were discussed. The topo maps were in the process of being revised because they were outdated. The consultant stated that Alameda Point had sunk somewhat. He noted that the audience received Peter Calthorpe's presentation very well. He had emphasized sustainability and regionalism for Alameda Point, and kept future generations in mind. He noted that there was no interaction after the presentation. He noted that the next meeting would be held at the O Club on December 13, 2007, and they planned to address a range of development scenarios.

b. Oral Status Report regarding the Oakland/Chinatown Advisory Committee (Board Member Mariani).

Board member Mariani was not in attendance to present this report. Mr. Thomas noted that there was nothing to report.

- c. Oral Status Report regarding the Transportation subcommittee (Vice President Kohlstrand).

Vice President Kohlstrand was not in attendance to present this report.

- d. Oral Status Report regarding the Alameda Climate Protection Task Force (Board Member Cunningham).

Board member Cunningham noted that a meeting had been held, but he did not attend.

12. ADJOURNMENT: 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Thomas, Secretary
City Planning Board

This meeting was audio and video taped.